

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT [441]

Notice of Intended Action

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code section 234.6, the Department of Human Services proposes to amend Chapter 58, “Emergency Assistance” and Chapter 153, “Funding for Local Services,” Iowa Administrative Code.

The Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009, Public Law 110-329, appropriated \$600 million in additional funds to the Social Services Block Grant Program to address necessary expenses resulting from hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters occurring during 2008 which the President declared major disasters and from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Iowa was awarded \$11, 157, 944 under this legislation.

The funds will be administered through the Department of Human Services as the single state agency for the Social Services Block Grant, but have been allocated to three departments (Human Services, Public Health, and Elder Affairs) for qualifying expenditures. Of the \$4,979,944 allocated to the Department of Human Services, the Department’s amendment to the Social Services Block Grant Pre-Expenditure Report provides that \$3,330,627 will be used to fund a new mental health counseling program for persons directly affected by the weather-related disasters of 2008.

These amendments adopt new Division V of Chapter 58 to implement this program, called Ticket to Hope. Under this program, people in need of mental health services may receive up to eight authorized 45- to 50-minute psychotherapy sessions with an approved mental health provider.

Access to the program will be through the Iowa Concern hotline, which will determine eligibility, authorize services, and submit claims to the Department of Human Service for payment. The services will be provided at no cost to the person receiving counseling.

These amendments do not provide for waivers in specified situations, since the changes benefit the persons affected by offering care that is not otherwise accessible. Requests for the waiver of any rule may be submitted under the Department's general rule on exceptions at 441--1.8(17A,217).

These amendments were also Adopted and Filed Emergency and are published herein as **ARC 7641B**. The purpose of this Notice is to solicit comment on that submission, the subject matter of which is incorporated by reference.

Any interested person may make written comments on the proposed amendments on or before April 15, 2009. Comments should be directed to Mary Ellen Imlau, Bureau of Policy Analysis and Appeals, Department of Human Services, Hoover State Office Building, 1305 East Walnut Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114. Comments may be sent by fax to (515)281-4980 or by E-mail to policyanalysis@dhs.state.ia.us.